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THEFT

Woman wants vial back

DAVE JOHNSON
 InPort News Staff

WAINFLEET — Dale Swain made everything to his daughter Rachel, see **FATHER'S ASHES** | A2

FESTIVAL: More than 400 volunteers made event possible

Thousands experience 'days gone by' at Marshville



Mike Jansen leads members of the 1st Lincoln Militia during a musket demonstration held Sunday afternoon during the 22nd annual Marshville Heritage Festival.

MARYANNE FIRTH
 InPort News Staff

WAINFLEET — The spirit of the 1850s came alive last weekend, and tens of thousands of people were there to enjoy it. The 22nd annual Marshville Heritage Festival opened its gates to record crowds that bared the windy weather to have the experience of a lifetime.

Like taking a step back in time, Marshville Heritage Village was filled not only with historic buildings, but with volunteers dressed in full period costumes, offering a variety of demonstrations, entertainment and interesting information about the olden days.

Festival chair Margaret Robertson said people often return year after year for the annual event because they enjoy the family-oriented atmosphere, as well as the opportunity to "see the way things were done in days gone by."

see **MARSHVILLE** | A2

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■ FATHER'S ASHES

'My dad was everything to me'

FROM PAGE A1

When he died 11 years ago, besides memories and photos, Rachel had one constant reminder of her father with her at all times — some of his ashes.

Those ashes were in a small, stainless steel vial at the end of a black felt chain that hung from the rearview mirror of her car.

A couple of weeks ago, that vial, along with a sweater, other clothes and sunglasses, were stolen from her car when it was parked overnight at the quarry on Quarry Rd. in Wainfleet.

"My dad was everything to me," Rachel said.

When she discovered the break-in to her car, Rachel "freaked out" and spent hours searching the parking lot and surrounding area. She also called police to report the theft.

"I've been back to the quarry almost every night, hoping someone will walk by wearing my sweater or sunglasses. I just keep hoping I'll find the vial."

She said whoever broke into her car may have done so because there was a GPS holder stuck on the windshield and they may have been looking for a GPS.

What she doesn't understand is why someone took the vial.

"You can tell by looking at it that it's not worth anything but it's my dad's ashes. I have no idea why they would take it."

Her mother Kathy said the thief may have believed there were drugs in the vial because of its long shape.

But Kathy said the vial is



Supplied photo

Rachel Swain is shown with her father Dale. A vial containing her father's ashes was stolen from Rachel's car.

sealed shut with crazy glue and can't be opened. "Rachel was 10 when her dad passed away in April 1999. He called her his 'sparkling diamond.' She was so heartbroken that I bought the vial and put his ashes in so she could keep him with her always," said Kathy.

Her father's ashes have been in every car Rachel has owned.

"I feel like he's saved me from a lot of things," said Rachel. "I feel lost without the vial. I need it back."

She said anyone with information on who broke into her car should call police. She wants her father's ashes back more than anything else, she said and added whoever has information can call her as well at 905-359-9823.

djohnson@wellandtribune.ca

■ MARSHVILLE



MARYANNE FIRTH Staff Photo

Volunteers Bob Dean, Nicholas Dean and Ralph Costello move a large log, ready to be cut, toward the back entrance of the steam saw mill.

More than 400 volunteers make Marshville a success

FROM PAGE A1

Visitors are often surprised, she said, when they see the calibre of festival a small town like Wainfleet is able to pull off.

It takes more than 400 dedicated volunteers to make the three-day event possible, creating a historic, friendly and welcoming environment for an estimated 20,000 guests.

"This is a treasure that Wainfleet has, and it's great that we can showcase it," Robertson said of the festival.

The event provided visitors with countless things to do and see, including exhibits by the Niagara Antique

Power Association featuring early farming and household items, a daily car show featuring vehicles from different eras, hundreds of crafts, and performances by a wide variety of entertainment acts.

There were displays of vintage clothing and toys, live exhibits of the 1st Lincoln Militia, and freshly-made old-fashioned apple fritters that had a steady line-up of visitors waiting for a taste all weekend.

No one went home empty handed, as many of the demonstrations provided free souvenirs, such as shingles stamped with the festival name, for people to take home.

Visitors were able to see how those wooden shingles were made, how horseshoes were created, and were able to try their hand at creating a piece of rope.

Robertson said many people were also drawn to the handmade canoe, made by five volunteers, that was to be raffled off at the end of the weekend.

Each year, a canoe is built and raffled, she said, generating additional funds for the village.

All proceeds from the festival each year go toward maintaining the buildings at the village and making any necessary improvements or

additions, Robertson said.

"This is the only form of revenue we have, we're not sponsored, we don't get any government dollars," she said, adding she was thankful it was yet another successful year for the festival.

The event is run by families for families, with several generations of volunteers assisting each year, she said. For many, it has become tradition to participate, whether as a visitor, demonstrator or volunteer.

"This is an important part of Wainfleet, and an important part of our lives."

mjrth@wellandtribune.ca

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portraits

■ MARSHVILLE HERITAGE FESTIVAL

The old days come to life at Marshville



MARYANNE FIRTH Staff Photo
Sue Gamble, of the 1st Lincoln Militia, checks the chicken and rice soup she has cooking over an open flame.



MARYANNE FIRTH Staff Photo
Alanna Roest collects freshly made old-fashioned apple fritters from Joanne Morin.



MARYANNE FIRTH Staff Photo
Volunteer Taylor Bouwers demonstrates how to work an 1895 wood lathe.



MARYANNE FIRTH Staff Photo
Herman Stolk and Mike Basco work to create souvenir shingles that visitors were able to take home from the festival.



MARYANNE FIRTH Staff Photo
Volunteer Neale Kramer helps to dish out piping hot soup made fresh over an outdoor fire Sunday during the 22nd annual Marshville Heritage Festival.

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MARYANNE FIRTH Staff Photo
Nicole Julien and Marilena Biscotti put their sawing skills to the test, learning it may not be as easy as it seems.



MARYANNE FIRTH Staff Photo
Matthew Hines works to move freshly baled hay as other volunteers demonstrate how the hay-balling equipment is used.



MARYANNE FIRTH Staff Photo
Glen Moore, of Wainfleet's Heritage Woodcarvers, creates a welcome sign by hand.

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ourview

A Wainfleet treasure

The weather last weekend wasn't the greatest, but the crowds still showed up for the 22nd annual Marshville Heritage Festival.

More than one visitor who spoke to InPort News reporter Maryanne Firth gave the festival an A grade in history and fun.

People told her the event, with a variety of activities and exhibits was a great way to spend time with family and have fun.

Children learned while they explored the grounds of Marshville Heritage Festival.

They saw what life was like for the people who lived in the township back in the mid-1800s, with authentic displays and working machinery from the time period. The grounds are also many period buildings, something unique the festival has to offer there in Niagara and beyond.

Festival chair Margaret Robertson said people often return year after year for the annual event because they enjoy the family-oriented atmosphere, as well as those are often to "see the way things were done in days gone by."

Visitors are often surprised, she said, when they see the calibre of festival a small town like Wainfleet is able to pull off.

It takes more than 400 dedicated volunteers to make three day event possible, creating a historic, friendly and welcoming environment for an estimated 20,000 guests.

"This is a treasure that Wainfleet has, and it's great that we can showcase it," Robertson said of the festival.

We agree with Robertson, the festival and the grounds are a treasure that everyone should visit.

The organizers and volunteers are also another treasure the festival has.

We'd like to congratulate both on putting on another great event.

Give it back

Whoever broke into Rachel Swain's car in the last few weeks, needs to give her necklace with its attached vial, back.

That vial contains the ashes of her father, Dale, who died 11 years ago. Beside memories and photos, it's the only connection the woman has with her father.

We'd hope the thief who broke into her car has at least a tiny bit of conscience and returns the necklace and vial. If someone knows who broke into her car, they should call police or urge the person to return the vial and give Rachel her father's back.

I'VE BEEN THINKING

We must keep our priorities straight

MAHLON MARTIN
Portal Village Bible Chapel

The first Monday in September is Labour Day. This date is set aside for the voice of the labour to proclaim its goals and ambitions.

We thank God for the status our working personnel have attained. Things are so structured that if one wishes to work hard they will find themselves being richly rewarded for their diligence. Nothing seems to come easily. There is no royal road to success.

But if we are willing to give it all we've got we will find ourselves moving toward the top like cream. The idea of being gainfully employed is good. It gives one a deep sense of self-satisfaction to be able to provide a comfortable living standard for our dependents and us. It also keeps us well occupied. Having too much free time on our hands just simply isn't good for us.

We must be careful at all times to keep our priorities straight. We may never do anything at the expense of our family. If God has given us a family they must always retain a very important spot in our values. We owe much to our family. They are the ones we go with on vacation with. It is their funny stories we hear around the dinner table in the evening. It is while we are with them that we relax from the pressures of the day.

They are the ones we go to when we are not feeling well. The bible has some excellent advice for all family members. "Wives, understand and support your

husbands by submitting to them in ways that honor the Master. Husbands, go all out in love for your wives. Don't take advantage of them. Children, do what your parents tell you. This delights the Master no end. Parents, don't come down too hard on your children or you'll crush their spirits." Colossians 3:18-21 (Message) Even more importantly, we must always remember we all are God's creatures and He always needs to be our highest priority.

Since we are God's creatures we must at all times keep our lives in tune with Him, because we will be accountable to Him at the end of life's road.

To keep our lives in tune our first step must be to receive Jesus Christ into our life as Lord and Saviour.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me." Revelation 3:20. Even though we do have the Lord in our lives we will still need to do our daily bible reading because our daily times of prayer. We must take time to teach our children to say their prayers before they go to bed in the evening. We need to have fellowship with God's people and enjoy weekly church services.

The amount of time we spend in our daily exercises may vary according to our circumstances. Since God created us and placed us here on this earth He obviously did it with purpose in mind.

The bible states that God created us so He could have fellowship with us. In fact back in the Old Testament we have a

lengthy account of instructions that God gave to His people. They were to build a tabernacle and offer daily sacrifices so they fellowship with God.

They needed these sacrifices because man is a sinner and has always been. When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden they were immediately put out because of their sin. Sin always separates us from God. This is why it was necessary for Jesus Christ to come to this earth and die for us. "For [there is] one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. 1 Timothy 2:5-6" This made it possible for God to receive us into fellowship with Him.

God wants us to dwell with Him for eternity. We must be born again, that is born into His family for this to take place. All that choose against Jesus and close their lives to Him will be in hell for eternity. "And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may (continue to) believe in the name of the Son of God." John 5:1-13

I sincerely hope that you will open your life to Jesus today.

When He enters you will have eternal life and you will be on your way to heaven. Tell Him you are sorry for your sin and ask Him to be your saviour.

readers'views

Centre will bankrupt city

As a social democrat, I do not mind paying taxes and spending taxpayers' money. But when they throw a common good like health care, education and infrastructure. As an artist, I recognize the need for support for the arts, culture and sports facilities. I cannot, however, support present plans for the so-called Health and Wellness Centre in Port Colborne.

The plans will bankrupt the city of Port Colborne, put us into debt, raise taxes for all for the benefit of what I believe to be only 10% of our population. This is not fair, equitable or democratic.

If you take the city's hydro funds of \$15 million, which I believe belong to hydro users in Port, and divide it by the population of 18,500, every person in the city deserves \$808.63. In other words, the nine of us who will not use this centre will lose \$7,273.83 to the one person who will.

If you take the \$32 million, the projected cost of this project, and do the same calculation, the nine people not using the centre will lose \$3,525.51 to the person who will. Our mayor and the majority of council, who have taken on this role to represent all citizens equally, seem to feel this is fair.

Comparing Port's proposed facility with those our CEO looked at to determine operating costs, our council is planning to build one of the largest and most expensive complexes in one of the smallest and poorest communities of all.

Every person or against this project only wants what's best for Port. Other communities have built better complexes for less with more community involvement.

Why build a glass entertainment complex to benefit outside operators and architects while ignoring the needs of a majority of citizens? Then came the

announcement of the nine-storey hotel and we can see we're using tax money to help a hotel operator fill rooms on weekends. If you compare this 10-unit hotel to the 68-unit West Western in Welland and the 80-unit Comfort Inn, which combined have 33 staff, the \$310,738 we can expect in taxes represents a 93% return on the investment of tax dollars.

Compare this to the recent announcement in Guelph of a \$30 million facility owned by Canadian Solar which will produce solar panels. This project, which includes considerable tax incentives, is expected to create 500 good paying jobs.

Anyone who votes to continue with this project as it stands should not be re-elected. A small community like ours cannot be all things to all people, but must be the most it can for the majority.

Larry Rosnuk
Port Colborne

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■ **GOOD FOOD:** First Lutheran has a great party planned for Saturday night

Up-lifted at a church pig roast

Pig roasts are a blast — unless of course you're the pig.

They always signify some sort of a party in the works, a celebration of some sort.

This Saturday, thanks to the initiative of Matthew Ayres and Chuck Simpson, First Lutheran Church on Elm St. is having one as a fundraiser. And, it's going to be followed by a movie, but with a twist. The film will be shown outdoors on a giant screen in the church's courtyard. Think a drive-in, but without the cars. It's really neat.

This year's event is actually the second go-round, the first being last year's. And if last year's was any indication, it's going to be a lot of fun and very family-oriented as it's a non-alcoholic event.

The meal itself is amazing. Chuck operates Pig Roast Promotions and he starts



George Duma
BY GEORGE

cooking early in the morning so that by the time the dinner hour rolls around, the spread is ready. The pork is complemented by a bunch of incredible pot-luck salads made with congregation members, with buns and lots of good feelings on the side.

Matt and Chuck are two of the nicest guys you'll ever want to meet, just true gentlemen in every sense of the word. They make an excellent team, with Matt and his lovely wife Susan doing a lot of the legwork before Chuck comes in and does his thing, which is to roast up one of the most amazing pork dinners one will ever taste.

I caught up with Chuck this past Sunday at the Marshville

Heritage Festival, where he roasts up pig on a bun every year down near the old schoolhouse and the old church in the Marshville village.

Chuck is great company. He always has a smile on his face and he has a great sense of humor.

He says he starts cooking the day's meal about nine hours before it needs to be ready. The pig he roasts on a spit will then feed 150 people.

While chatting, I noticed the tray of crackle sitting next to the pig. Almost like a reflex action, I reached over and grabbed a piece as we talked.

Crackle isn't for everybody. It's the crispy skin that's carved off the pig once it's ready and it's them set aside.

see DUMA | A6



GEORGE DUMA InPort News Photo
Chuck Simpson, owner-operator of Pig Roast Promotions, will be head chef at First Lutheran Church's pig roast-movie night tomorrow. Above, Chuck prepares to carve up pork at last weekend's Marshville Heritage Festival.

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Movie and roasted pig at First Lutheran Church

FROM PAGE A5

Health food it's not about to crackle fans, it's arguably the best part of the day at a pig roast. It's also the reward for hanging out with Chuck while he cooks and being there when it's ready to go.

You certainly don't need me to tell you that crackle is probably one of the worst things you could ever ingest into your system, health-wise, but it's so incredibly good. It's why it's a good thing I go to one pig roast a year — this one. Any more frequency than that, and my arteries would be like stone by now.

The movie selection for the evening is geared to a family setting. Last year, Matt screened Secondhand Lions, a cute film starring Michael Caine and Robert Duvall as two wealthy off-the-wall uncles who take in their young nephew for summer,

played by Haley Joel Osment.

This year, the movie is Up, the animated gem of a film from last year that came out of nowhere to pick up a number of Oscar nominations, including best picture. It was only the second time in history an animated film received a best picture nomination. Beauty and the Beast being the first back in the early '90s. And while Up did lose the best picture award to The Hurt Locker, it was the runaway winner of the best animated film award.

The film centres around 78-year-old Carl Fredrickson.

By tying thousands of balloons to his home, Carl sets out to fulfill his lifelong dream to see the wilds of South America. Right after lifting off, however, he learns he isn't alone on his journey, since Russell, a wilderness explorer 70 years his junior, has inadvertently become a

strawaway on the trip.

We saw it in the theatre when it came out and it's an absolutely delightful movie, funny and poignant at the same time.

Tickets to the pig roast-movie night are \$15 for adults, \$10 for children six-16, while kids five and under are free. Tickets are available at the door.

If the weather doesn't hold, Matt and the gang will simply move the whole thing into the church hall and set up the screen in there. Either way, it promises to be a fun evening.

Festivities get underway at 4 p.m., but dinner isn't served until 6. The two hours are basically for socializing. After dinner, a magician will perform for the kids while everybody waits for darkness to come before the movie can be screened. It'll be a great evening of fun and quite possibly the best entertainment deal in

town that day.

First Lutheran Church is located at 988 Elm St. If you do need more information between now and tomorrow evening, feel free to call Matt at 905-834-1014.

George Duma is a resident of Port Colborne and has spent 30 years in the newspaper business. He is currently a member of the Journalism

faculty at Niagara College. He welcomes comments and column suggestions and can be reached at: gduma@cogeco.ca

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GEORGE DUMA inPort News Photo
First Lutheran Pastor Thomas Arlt, left, and Matthew Ayres are both gearing up for tomorrow's pig roast-movie night, to be held in the Elm St. church's courtyard.

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Photo: © We're the Best Columnists

■ **FESTIVAL:** Visitors enjoyed three-day event

Marshville makes grade with crowd

MARYANNE FIRTH
InPort News Staff

WAINFLEET — The 22nd annual Marshville Heritage Festival has earned an A grade in history and fun, according to the crowd.

Darlene Barnes, of Hamilton, brought her grandchildren to the festival for the very first time last Sunday.

She and her family enjoyed the variety of activities and exhibits that were available for them to experience.

The crafters were a particular favourite, as well as the demonstrations within the steam saw mill, she said.

"We'll definitely be back. What a great way to spend time with family and have fun."

Todd and Bonnie Shore travelled to the festival from Stratford, bringing their three children Skylar and Jillian

to experience the heritage village.

"The girls have learned a lot, and seen a lot," Todd said. "There's a lot of good history here for the kids, how things used to be done."

Though she's been to a similar festival on a smaller scale, Bonnie said she was amazed by the amount of people at the event.

For nine-year-old Dylan Clark-Tanguay, the highlight of the festival was simple.

"I liked the candy shop," he said, while enjoying a rock sugar stick.

He and brother Nicholas both learned a lot about "the olden days," he said, and enjoyed the buildings and machinery they got to see.

Marilena Biscotti, of Grimsby, said she often comes out to the festival and has a few favourite treats when she does, such as the homemade soup made over

an outdoor fire.

It's important that the people of Wainfleet are keeping the history alive, she said.

"You lose something if you don't remember the past."

Chris Brueske, of Fenwick, attends the festival annually with her children Emily and William.

"Everything is so fresh here. The atmosphere is so different," she said.

The family took on the rope demonstration, each making a piece to take home, before heading off for some kettle corn.

Chris said her children learned about pioneers

during the last school year, making this trip a little more poignant than in the past.

"It's important to know where you come from, to know how you got where you are," she said.

Katie Sneek, of Port Colborne, said she enjoys coming to the festival for the crafts.

"There's some really unique stuff here. It's nice to see," she said, while carrying a few recent purchases.

Some items found at the festival can't be found anywhere else in the area, she said, which makes for a nice shopping trip.

mfrith@wellandtribune.ca



MARYANNE FIRTH Staff Photo
Skylar and Jillian Shore, of Stratford, have a special souvenir to remember their time at Marshville Heritage Festival.



Are You Feeling the Pain?

Are you feeling the pain from stiff knees, sore finger joints and an aching back? These are just a few of the ailments we seem to suffer as we age. As a matter of fact, by the time we turn 45 years old, almost half of us will suffer the aches and pains of joint problems caused by aging, injury, overuse or arthritis.

Joint stiffness often limits your mobility and makes it difficult to perform many daily functions - because it's too painful. Yet, in spite of the pain and the problems caused by aching joints, many people are reluctant to take prescription drugs because of the side effects.

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■ **HERITAGE:** Marshville Heritage Festival celebrates the past

'It's all about sharing history'

MARYANNE FIRTH
InPort News Staff

WAINFLEET — To appreciate the present, you must celebrate the past.

That's the message that

organizers and demonstrators at the 22nd annual Marshville Heritage Festival are hoping to convey.

The festival, which happened over Labour Day weekend, celebrates life in the 1800s

and gives visitors an idea of just what life was like back then. Herman Stolk runs the Marshville Shingle Mill — a popular attraction at the event each year — and performs live demonstrations of how the

wooden shingles used to be created.

"It's all about sharing history," he said, while taking a break from stamping souvenir shingles with the festival name. "They get to see how the old boys did it when men were men."

Stolk said it's enjoyable to be able to share that heritage with a crowd, especially with youth

who he hopes will gain an appreciation for the laborious work that was once required.

"It's important because it lets them know what their grandfather, their great-grandfather had to do. They get an appreciation for how tough it was."

For many people visiting Marshville, the demonstrations are a real eye-opener, said festival chair Margaret Robertson.

"Our lives are so full now. Many people count their blessings to see what people had to do back then. They worked very hard for very little money."

Wainfleet Mayor Barb Henderson said learning about

the past gives people an understanding of where they've come from.

"This is our history, our roots, and it's something we should all be proud of and share."

Mike Jansen, of the 1st Lincoln Militia, said people can't appreciate what they have today until they understand what those in the past have gone through.

The festival allows for that history to be shared with a large audience, he said, while "remembering the hardships and struggles" that people of the past had to experience.

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Herman Stolk, Marshville Shingle Mill

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■ ELECTION: Ward 2

Taking another run

MARYANNE FIRTH
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Angie Desmarais believes she can be the strong voice that's needed in Ward 2.

After twice attempting to seek the ward seat — once in 2003 and again in 2006 — the longtime Port Colborne resident has decided to throw her hat in the ring for a third time.

"I'm going to take another run at it," she told The Tribune Friday, adding it was only 36 votes that separated her and incumbent Domenic Urinli in 2008.

Desmarais, 57, said she's confident she can be a strong voice for the people, helping both the city and the ward to move forward successfully. But before progression can occur, a number of issues need to be addressed, she said, such as accountability within council.

Desmarais would like to see a code of conduct put in place that sets expectations for elected officials to live up to, if those expectations are not met, "we need a vehicle whereby they're removed," she said. She believes all voting within council chambers should be recorded, making councillors "more accountable to the electors."

"Something as simple as this can make a huge difference."

Desmarais said council's focus should be on affordability.

"These days, the price of everything is going up. We need to take a step back and look at our needs instead of our wants."

Projects need to be environmentally fit the community's need, she said, and the city has to "get creative" with funding so it doesn't put a burden on the taxpayers.

While she is a self-pro-

claimed "team player," if the team is going in the wrong direction, Desmarais has no problem standing up and saying so.

She would like to see direction sought from constituents through semi-annual ward meetings, giving the public a larger platform to voice their opinions.

In Ward 2, she plans to host "meetings" and discussions with absentee landlords.

The city should look into developing loan or grant packages, or offer tax break incentives to encourage landlords to properly maintain their property — making homes safer for tenants, she said.

If elected, Desmarais also hopes to address "barriers to living" found within the city, such as the lack of access to Port Colborne's beaches and waterfront.

Desmarais has long been active in the community, sitting on a number of committees and boards such as Heritage Port Colborne, the Gateway Association and Port Cares.

■ ELECTION: Ward 2

Candidate offers a 'wealth' of business experience

MARYANNE FIRTH
InPort News

PORT COLBORNE — Pierre Kountouris hopes to use his wealth of business experience to help Port Colborne thrive. The 44-year-old project manager recently filed his papers, entering the Ward 2 race for the upcoming municipal election.

Always involved in the community in some capacity, Kountouris has set on a number of the city's committees over the years, assisted with a variety of festivals, and has been heavily involved in local minor sports. He has experience in both the public and private sectors, which he hopes to bring to the table to help rejuvenate the city.

In 2003, he found an unsuccess-

cessful bid for the Ward 2 seat, and has since focused his attention on raising his four children — Phillip, Julianna, Connor and Jenna — with wife Kelly.

Kountouris expressed his love for the lakeside city, and said it's a place he hopes to see his children call home as they grow into adults.

But in order for youth to embrace Port Colborne, "we need to keep pushing economic development, and create industry assessment

that will in turn create jobs," he said.

While the upcoming Health and Wellness Centre project is "an exciting one," Kountouris said it's "not the only project that will motivate our youth to stay in the community."

In order to retain its current residents while welcoming in new faces, the city needs to better measure its economic development, he said.

Kountouris said his "fairly extensive business background" will lend itself to the role of councillor and assist the city with its progression, if he is elected.

The city, he said, is "for the most part headed in the right direction."

"As long as we keep being responsible and transparent,

and don't rely on the backs of the taxpayers to pay for new projects, we'll continue to do OK."

It's an exciting time in Port Colborne, Kountouris said, as infrastructure projects move forward across the city.

While a "nice gateway into the community" is being created through the construction, those improvements need to continue on into Port Colborne's east side, he said.

Kountouris has long been an advocate for revitalization of the city's east side — a fight he hopes to continue from council chambers after the Oct. 25 vote.

"We need a strong voice in our ward, and I'm not one to back down from conflict. My integrity is everything to me," he said.

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■ **Interactive Infant Program** on Monday, September 13, 20, 27 and October 4 from 1:30-3:30. Pre-registration is required. This afternoon program is for infants and their parent/caregiver.

■ **Play is a Serious Business, Play & Learn - Interactive Preschool Program** on Thursday, September 9 from 9:30 - 11:30. Pre-registration is required. This morning program is for preschoolers aged 2½ to 6 years old and their parent/caregiver.

■ **Play is a Serious Business, Play & Learn - Interactive Toddler Program** on Wednesday, September 8 from 9:30 - 10:45. Pre-registration is required. This

morning program is for toddlers aged 18 months to 30 months and their parent/caregiver.

■ **Play is a Serious Business, Play & Learn - Interactive Preschool Program** on Thursday, September 9 from 9:30 - 11:30. Pre-registration is required. This morning program is for preschoolers aged 2½ to 6 years old and their parent/caregiver.

Sessions are free of charge.

Please visit the Ontario Early Years Centre, Port Cares, 92 Charlotte St. Port Colborne or call 905-534-9071 ext. 238 or e-mail oeyc-pc@portcares.on.ca for more information.

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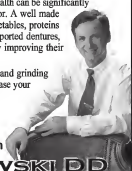
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■ ELECTION

Looking to serve for a sixth term

KAESHA FORAND
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Gary Bruno would like to serve a sixth term on council and last week filed his papers to enter the Ward 3 race in Port Colborne.

With challenges ahead of council in the coming years, Bruno is looking forward to what he calls "the great reset," a way to rethink municipal

growth, partnerships with the private sector and being cost efficient following tremendous investments in local municipalities by both tiers of local government.

"Specifically in the next term, I want to focus on ensuring the improvements made on all city facilities have a maintenance plan that keeps them looking good, productive, and a source of local pride. It makes no

sense to complete all these improvements if we are not supportive of their upkeep."

During the previous years, he's seen decisions made quickly to ensure council obtains the proper funding for its projects.

However, during the next council term he would like to see council improve its communication with taxpayers. During his last term on council, Bruno was proud of the



Gary Bruno

"As always, we need to continue to grow our local economy, first by assisting existing business growth and stability, and in marketing to new businesses and people as to why

to choose Port Colborne."

His involvement with committees includes physician recruitment, finance, committee of adjustment, lease-free dog park, Greater Niagara circle route, Elm St. Landfill Site public liaison committee, Main St., BIA, Niagara Regional Broadband Network, Port Colborne Economic and Tourism Development Corp. and the Niagara Regional planning review committee.

The 56-year-old president of Park Smart Group, a resort-campground consul-

ing firm is married to Darcy and they have two children, Christopher, 25, and 24-year-old Nicole.

He volunteers for the annual Lions food drive, is a Niagara Entrepreneur of the Year Award recipient and also participates in fundraising cancer walks.

Bruno is the second person to submit their papers for Ward 3, incumbent councillor Ben Keany has also submitted her papers for the Oct. 25 election.

kforand@wellandtribune.ca

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■ **ELECTION:** French Catholic school board

Ensuring children receive a quality education

KAEASHA FORAND
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Carole Racette wants to ensure her grandchildren learn in a positive, stable school environment.

She also wants to ensure that future generations of students receive quality education.

For these reasons, Racette filed her papers for the position with le Conseil Scolaire De District Catholique Centre-Sud.

Racette has held the French trustee for the position, taking over from Luc Gauthier who stepped down.

"Education is really the foundation for future generations, especially the Francophone population in Ontario," she said. "Baby boomers are aging and need services, especially in their own language."

For 21 years, she worked for the government as program policy officer for the implementation of the French Language Services Act from 1985 to 2006, with the majority of that time with the Ministry of Health in Toronto.

Racette is 64 years old and

moved to Port Colborne in 2007. She has two daughters, Charmaine, 43, and 36-year-old Melanie.

If re-elected, she would like to focus on the board's special needs programs and ensuring special needs students receive the services and education they deserve. Board meetings are held on a monthly basis in Toronto, but Racette makes a point of attending any additional committee meetings to learn about the board's issues and next steps.

"Especially with my first year, I have a lot to learn. So when issues come to the board I have background information," Racette is the second person to file for the trustee position, she joins Jules Letourneau who is also vying for the position during the Oct. 25 election.

lforand@wellandtribune.ca

Carole Racette

■ **BACK TO SCHOOL:** Port High rolls out welcome mat

Easing the jitters

InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — The first day of high school can be pretty intimidating.

With hopes of easing those first-day jitters, staff at Port Colborne High School rolled out the welcome mat a little early for Grade 9 students.

An orientation day was held last Thursday, with more than 80 students gathered at the Elgin St. school to tour classrooms, meet teachers, and socialize with new classmates.

Students were also able to participate in a number of activities throughout the day, getting a taste of what the drama, phys-ed and music departments have to offer.

"We want them to see it's fun to get involved in high school," said vice-principal Andrea Jagoe-Lynett, adding the day helps students to "get off to a strong start."

But the day wasn't only for students. Parents gathered in

the school's library for a crash course on what high school life is all about, and how they can share support toward their children during the transition.

"We want parents to be involved, like they are in elementary school," Jagoe-Lynett said.

"It's a real partnership." Fourteen-year-old Christyne Columbo said she was a little afraid to experience her first real day of high school, though the orientation helped to ease her worries.

She was able to meet some new friends and even catch up with some familiar faces from her elementary school, Dewitt Carter.

Having a day just for the Grade 9 students is a "great way to get started," she said, as it helps everyone to become more comfortable.

Abbey MacPherson said the orientation provided her with a lot more insight into the school than she had expected.

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■ **FUNDING:** Feds give \$67,500

Protecting at-risk species

InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — The area is receiving \$67,500 from Environment Canada in an attempt to conserve and protect at-risk species and their habitats.

The announcement was made last Thursday by Niagara West Glanbrook MP Dean Allison on behalf of Jim Prentice, Canada's environment minister.

Of the funding, \$25,000 is going to Walfleet with a project designed to mitigate human-related impacts on the spotted turtle and Eastern Massasauga rattlesnake; \$20,000 to Port Colborne to protect the Fowler's toad; \$12,500 to Niagara Falls and Queenstown within the Niagara Gorge where dusky salamander live; and \$10,000 to Welland (Lyons Creek) to protect the American water willow.

Allison believes this program will go a long way to

preserving at-risk species.

"It's helpful in going a long way to educate people, letting them know and quite frankly letting the people be aware of what the issues are out there," he said



Dean Allison

Thursday morning in front of a small gathering at H.H. Knoll Lakeview

Park in Port Colborne. "I don't think many people understand species are at-risk and the education process just helps us all to be better stewards of what we have to deal with here."

"Maybe deal with landowners to understand how they can better deal with their properties and help protect these important species. The environment is just

so important.

"As part of the international year of biodiversity, we are happy to be working with local partners to help conserve Canada's natural legacy."

Anne Yagi, management biologist with the Ministry of Natural Resources, is happy to have the funding and said it will be put to good use.

"Habitat stewardship funding is extremely important for addressing stewardship actions necessary for the recovery of species at risk. In this region the funding provided by Environment Canada will support four stewardship projects at the grass roots level by allowing us to improve and protect important habitat, plant trees and create educational materials. Without this funding we would not be able to meet with landowners, improve habitat and study how well the improvements are working," she said.

■ **MINOR INJURIES:** Employees hit by debris

Truck crashes into bank

InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Two TD Canada Trust employees were taken to hospital after being hit by cabinets and debris when a truck struck the building last week.

Niagara Regional Police said the truck hit the back of the bank, the south-east corner, around 12:20 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 31. The area it hit is where an employee lunchroom is located.

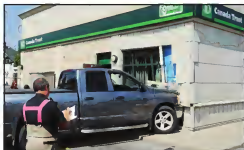
Police said the interior wall of the bank, where the truck hit, contained some cabinets. The cabinets and debris that fell struck the two employees who were sitting at a table.

Port Colborne Fire and Emergency Services and Niagara JMS paramedics were called to the bank and found both employees suffering from minor injuries. The two were taken to hospital as a precaution.

The driver of the truck, who was not named, was not injured.

Damage to the building was estimated at \$200,000.

Mike Bendia, Port Colborne's fire prevention



DAVE JOHNSON Staff Photo

Port Colborne Fire and Emergency Services acting Capt. Joe Bilodeau looks over the scene at the back of TD Canada Trust where a truck drove into the wall. Damage to the building is estimated at \$200,000 and two employees sitting in a lunch room at the back of the bank, on Clarence St., suffered minor injuries when cabinets tipped over and hit them.

officer, said the city's chief building official was called in to make sure the building was structurally sound enough for employees and customers to continue using the bank.

The bank was determined to be safe for use, though it was recommended no one use that area of the building.

Bendia said the truck was left in place and the back area

of the bank was barricaded off.

He said officials did not want to remove the truck and possibly cause further damage before the area was shored up.

"A structural engineer will be called in to evaluate that corner of the building."

Police said no charges are anticipated at the crash took place on private property.

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■ **HORSES:** Equine Ability offers horse rides

Helping children forget their disabilities for a while

ALLAN BENNER
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — "He's pretty awesome," Riley Robin said as he rode Sir Steven.

"He's a good trotter."

Riley's excitement was obvious as he rode the horse on that hot, dusty late summer evening, as the sun set across the fields to the west of Angus Ruigrok's 3908 Neff Rd. farm she named Equine Ability.

He talked almost continuously as he sat atop the huge black thoroughbred gelding -- a former competitive jumper that now devotes his time to gently carrying children through the corral, giving them the opportunity to learn how to ride a horse and forget their disabilities for a while.

Despite being on the back of the huge animal, Riley wasn't worried.

He said he liked being "up and" and he liked "being with the horses and hanging out with them."

Riley has autism.

"His loves being out here," said Riley's mother, Tracey Roblin. "It's been a really great thing for him."

Since he's been riding, she's noticed a big difference in Riley's confidence and self-esteem.

"He's fabulous on a horse. He seems to have an affinity with the horses. It's being up there and having control, being able to do it, feeling that sense of accomplishment," she said.

Sir Steven is one of several horses at the farm that offers therapeutic riding for children with various disabilities.

Four-year-old Kirstyn Hipkiss was at the farm riding Cowboy, a paint pony gelding. Her mother Taryn Hipkiss, and other volunteers walked slowly alongside the horse, ensuring the little girl with spastic diplegic cerebral palsy was safe in the saddle.

Most of the time, Kirstyn uses a walker, or wheelchair to get around. "But when she's on a horse, that's taken out



ALLAN BENNER Staff Photo
Four-year-old Kirstyn Hipkiss sits on Cowboy while her mother Taryn helps hold her steady in the saddle and Riley Robin, 8, sits aboard Sir Steve. They're two of the first students enrolled in horse riding lessons offered by Equine Ability, a therapeutic horse farm in rural Port Colborne.

of the equation," her mother said. "She loves it. She seems to have a connection with the horses."

They're two of the first students at Equine Ability, a horse farm that specializes in therapeutic riding lessons.

Ruigrok said the lessons offer students "a way to par-

ticipate in an activity that they might not be able to participate in otherwise. It builds a lot of confidence in a lot of these riders -- huge confidence. It's hugely beneficial."

Although it's called therapeutic riding, Ruigrok said it's not really a therapy.

It's essentially just recreational riding, geared towards riders with various disabilities.

"We're teaching these kids how to ride in whatever capacity they're able to," she said.

Riding horses alone is enough to make a huge difference to the children who

participate.

"They get tons of benefits. But our main goal in therapeutic riding is to teach them how to ride."

"We want to empower our riders," she said. "We're not doing something to them anymore. We don't want to limit them by saying they're in therapy."

Most horse farms won't accept students with disabilities. They're not equipped to safely allow people with various disabilities to ride the horses.

"But we have the equipment, the horses and the training to modify or to maximize the potential of these riders."

She said the program is focused on the goals of the rider.

"If they want to learn how to ride and eventually to compete, then that's what we'll work towards. If they just want to come out and have a good time, then that's what we'll work on, too."

Ruigrok has been teaching therapeutic riding at other farms, but this year, when she left work as a physiotherapist for Niagara Health System on maternity leave, she decided to spend her year off starting a therapeutic riding program at her own farm.

"Basically everything was ready here for us to run a pro-

gram," she said.

A board of directors was formed in March, and Ruigrok started teaching her first three students at the start of August.

Although the farm is located in rural north east Port Colborne and not that easy to find, Ruigrok said it's actually not too far from several urban areas. It's just minutes away from Welland, Port Erie, Niagara Falls, and a short trip down the QEW from St. Catharines.

"It's easily accessible from a lot of areas."

Ruigrok has big plans for the program in the future.

She's hoping to bring in more students, and possibly to a service club involved to offer subsidized lessons for students that need it. She'd also like to gain access to an indoor arena to allow the programs to continue over the winter.

"We're just basically trying to get the word out right now that we're here and we're needing riders and volunteers," she said.

An open house is planned for Oct. 3, including "demonstration rides for people to show them what therapeutic riding is because there are a whole bunch of misconceptions about therapeutic riding."

She said it's often confused with hippotherapy, which brings together other professionals like physiotherapists, and speech pathologists and use horse riding as a tool in the patient's therapy.

There is currently no hippotherapy program in Niagara she knows of. But that could change.

Ruigrok, a level-one hippo-therapist, hopes to offer that program in the future too, but for now she said they're just focusing on getting the therapeutic riding program up and running.

More information about the program is available online at www.equineability-niagara.com or by calling 905-362-5773.

Ruigrok said students need to fill out paperwork, sign consent forms and they need a doctor's referral.

"It's just to see what it's safe for them to ride," she said.

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■ GOLDEN PUCK HOCKEY CAMP



BERND FRANKE Staff Photo

Port Colborne Minor Hockey Association president Bill Steele, second from left, top row, accepts a cheque for \$3,800 from Rob Bizley, director of a week-long hockey camp conducted at Westside Arena by the Golden Puck Hockey Committee. The camp, which was sold out for the 19th straight year, attracted 112 boys and girls seven to 16 years of age. Also taking part in a cheque presentation ceremony at centre ice are, front row, from left, instructor Shawn Coers, Andrew Leblanc, Abby D'Onofrio, Mason Klauk, Harrison Langerak, instructor Keven Langerak; back row, instructor Tyler Brown and instructor Dave Caldwell.

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SPOTLIGHT on service

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Last day to register is October 30th, pending room in classes. All subject to change without notice.

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ALONG THE LAKESHORE

THURSDAY, SEPT. 16, 23, 30, OCT. 7 AND 14

Preschool Story Time for ages 2-5 at the Wainfleet Township Public Library. A six-week program of stories, songs, activities and crafts runs Thursdays from 10:00 to 10:45 a.m.

No fee for the program but please call 905-899-1277 to pre-register. Each child must be accompanied by their parent/caregiver. This

session's theme is Fantastic Fall.

MONDAY, SEPT. 13

Family Will Night at the Wainfleet Township Public Library from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. All ages are welcome to drop in to play Nintendo Wii. Not only great family fun, but great exercise too!

THURSDAY, SEPT. 16

Ancestry Library Edition

Workshop at the Wainfleet Township Public Library from 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. This hands-on workshop will show you how to use this genealogy database. Must have some general computer experience. Please call 905-899-1277 to pre-register by September 14 as space is limited.

MONDAY, SEPT. 27
Adult Book Club at the Wainfleet Township Public Library at 6:30 p.m. This month's selection is *Labour Day* by Joyce Maynard. Please call 905-899-1277

to register as a book club member.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 30

Classic Book Club at the Wainfleet Township Public Library from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Join us for afternoon tea on the last Thursday of the month as we discuss the works of classic authors. This month's selection is *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens. Please call 905-899-1277 to pre-register your attendance.

TUESDAY, OCT. 5

Knitting Classes at the Wainfleet Township Public Library from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Beginners can learn how to knit or experienced knitters can learn new skills. Rhoda Wills will be offering 10 lessons (10 weeks) Tuesday afternoons from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. starting October 5. Cost is \$30. For adults and children ages 9 and up. Needles and yarn for beginners will be provided at the first lesson. Please call 905-899-1277 to pre-regis-

ter by September 27.
FRIDAY, OCT. 8
Red Cross Babysitter Course at the Wainfleet Township Public Library from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. This fun, interactive course teaches youth ages 11-15 how to be prepared and responsive caregivers. \$50 per student. Bring a lunch and a doll or teddy bear. Please call 905-899-1277 to pre-register by October 1. Minimum of 8 students and a maximum of 18.

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